

REGULAR MEETING AND PUBLIC HEARING  
OF THE FALLS CHURCH PLANNING COMMISSION  
January 19, 2010  
Council Chamber

1. **CALL TO ORDER:** Chair Lawrence called the meeting to order at 7:46 p.m. with all members present except Mr. Kearney.

2. **ROLL CALL:**

Members Present:	Ms. Hockenberry
	Mr. Lawrence
	Mr. Meeks
	Ms. Rodgers
	Ms. Teates
	Mr. Wodiska

Member Absent:	Mr. Kearney
----------------	-------------

Administrative Staff Present:	Ms. Cotellessa, General Manager of Development Services and Planning Director
-------------------------------	--

Chair Lawrence noted that Mr. Kearney was at a job site and would try to arrive later and hopefully attend the worksession.

3. **ADOPTION OF AGENDA:**

Ms. Hockenberry moved, and Ms. Teates seconded, to adopt the agenda.

Upon voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

4. **ELECTION OF OFFICERS:**

**CHAIR**

**VICE CHAIR**

Ms. Cotellessa called for nominations for the office of Chair of the Planning Commission

Mr. Meeks nominated, and Ms. Teates seconded, the nomination of Mr. John Lawrence for the Chair of the Planning Commission.

Upon voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

Ms. Cotellessa called for nominations for the office of Vice Chair. Ms. Hockenberry nominated, and Ms. Rodgers seconded, the nomination of Ms. Teates as Vice Chair of the Planning Commission.

Upon voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

The commissioners held a brief discussion about changing the seating arrangements and decided any changes would be made at the next meeting.

5. **PLANNING COMMISSION REPORTS:**

MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010

Ms. Teates had attended a few EDA meetings regarding the East End Development Strategy by the Virginia Tech graduate students who were working on it as part of a class project. The full report is on its way and she assumed it would go on the City's website for public viewing. They looked at ways to enhance the site and make it more of a mixed use commercial corridor for the City being that it's close to Seven Corners. As to transportation issues, there was a suggestion because of the site's proximity to East Falls Church Metro, perhaps a shuttle down to the Metro or better walkways would be appropriate.

Ms. Teates also mentioned that Ms. Cotellessa made a presentation for the EDA on the North Washington Streetscape and provided a report on sidewalk standards, a study done by the City of Rockville in Maryland on sidewalk size. There is a point where sidewalks can be too wide and they need to be in balance with the surrounding environment.

Chair Lawrence asked Ms. Cotellessa to send the report to all the commissioners.

Chair Lawrence reported that Ms. Hockenberry was officially sworn in as a planning commissioner; she had been filling in the term of Mr. Puentes and would be serving for four more years.

Ms. Hockenberry had attended several EDA meetings along with Ms. Teates and was a firm believer that the EDA, City Council, and Planning Commission should work closely together.

She reported that the representatives of the Washington Area Music Awards were at the meeting and had asked for money in support for the WAMMY'S which would be held at the end of February at the State Theater and the EDA okayed a \$3000 grant to them.

Ms. Hockenberry today attended the Chamber of Commerce meeting to hear Matt Smith's presentation on the Little City branding plan. She said the business owners were very excited about the plan. There are many ideas on using the logo in a wide variety of ways and she was impressed by the presentation.

Chair Lawrence related that on Sunday morning he had coffee with Dave Tarter and Mike Navotny of the EDA, and they talked about doing another joint session together.

Mr. Wodiska attended a CACT meeting on transportation. He reported there will be two traffic calming studies taking place, one for South Spring Street and another for North Virginia Avenue, between Park and Great Falls Street. Both of those hearings will be occurring on the 17th of February.

6. RECEIPT OF PETITIONS: None.

7. PLANNING DIRECTOR'S REPORT:

Ms. Cotellessa provided an update on the BB&T Special Use permit. The applicant went back and looked at several issues that had been of concern to the Planning Commission. They went back and did a full count for handicapped spaces for the shopping center and they had already met the requirement. They removed the ADA parking spaces and were going forward to the BZA next month and carry forward the Planning Commission's recommendation for denial.

MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010



Ms. Teates thought it was not a smart business decision because the people banking there would be an older demographic.

Ms. Cotellessa said the Gateway project will be coming back before the Planning Commission in the next few months. They had talked to neighbors on East Jefferson Street and behind them and they made a few adjustments to the plan. Ms. Block Sanford is working with them.

Chair Lawrence asked if the Gateway applicants had been sent the new Washington Streetscape plan. Ms. Cotellessa said they had. The plan shows an 18 and a half foot frontage but the new North Washington Streetscape plan shows a 20 foot frontage. They were asked to go back and adjust it.

Ms. Cotellessa further noted the pizza restaurant at the Tax Analyst Building is finally going forward, BJ's is coming along and should be open in May; and the Arts Space has various music venues on the next few weekends.

The George survey that was on line and on the buses themselves will be collected and the George Task Force will be looking at those Wednesday night and bringing forward their recommendations.

Ms. Cotellessa announced that all Boards and Commissions now have the ability to be wireless at their desk.

Ms. Rodgers inquired if there was still time to respond to the George survey. Ms. Cotellessa said if it's on line, to please go ahead and do it.

Mr. Wodiska asked about the status of the buildouts at the Spectrum.

Ms. Cotellessa said Mad Fox is moving forward and it was hoped they'll be open in the spring. As to the condominiums, at last count there were 42 that had been either purchased or purchase optioned. It's absorbing fairly slowly, approximately five a month, which in this market she thought wasn't too bad. Foster's Grill was gone; the franchisee lost his financing and could not reobtain it.

Chair Lawrence suggesting scheduling another retreat. There was discussion about times, dates, and venue. Ms. Cotellessa would find out from the Fairfax Park Authority, where they had the last retreat, what dates were available.

8. OLD BUSINESS: None.

9. NEW BUSINESS:

A. ADOPTION OF ANNUAL REPORT TO THE CITY COUNCIL

**ACTION: Review and Adopt Annual Report**

Chair Lawrence called for questions or comments. Mr. Wodiska saw one typo on Line 45.

Chair Lawrence noted some confusion on page 3 regarding the West End Park. Ms. Cotellessa had gone back and looked at the minutes and what was listed as A through P in the minutes are the exact final approved conditions. They didn't want to reuse the numbers and decided to use letters for less confusion.

Mr. Wodiska noted that Number 12 talked about the color of the bike racks and this

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**

one had been modified to take into consideration the comments that Mr. Wodiska had made at the time. So Number 12 is correct but didn't match what was originally 12.

Chair Lawrence said the meeting minutes were confusing. Ms. Cotellessa said they would pull the final language from the meeting minutes and put it in the annual report.

Ms. Cotellessa would check with the City Manager to see when the City Council's next regularly scheduled meeting is and she would try to get the Annual Report on their agenda, once it's approved by the Planning Commission.

**MOTION: Mr. Wodiska made a motion, which Ms. Teates seconded, to adopt the 2009 Annual Report to the City Council by the Planning Commission.**

Upon voice vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**B. APPOINTMENTS OF PLANNING COMMISSIONERS TO BOARDS, COMMISSIONS, AND COMMITTEES.**

**Action: Chair appoints commissioners as members/liaisons to City boards, commissions, and committees.**

Ms. Cotellessa had provided a blank 2010 list and added in Number 16, was the Watershed Advisory Committee that was not on the 2009 list. The 2009 list showed the incumbents who the Commission may or may not want to reappoint or reassign them.

Chair Lawrence suggested if anybody wanted a change from what they had last year, to let him know; otherwise he would tend to keep them the same for this year and at the next meeting it will be adopted.

Ms. Teates would like to stay on the EDA position but she's on the Housing and would like someone else to replace her because there are Housing meetings on nights that she can't attend. Ms. Hockenberry similarly had the same situation with the Tree Commission and was a regular attending member but she has a standing third Wednesday meeting now and can't attend.

Ms. Teates suggested it might help in the future to provide the night the meetings were scheduled.

Chair Lawrence noticed on page 7 the Library was missing.

It was decided the final appointments would be held over to the next meeting.

**C. 2011-2015 Capital Improvements Program. Presentation by Assistant City Manager**

Ms. Cindy Mester, Assistant City Manager, was in attendance to present the CIP report to the Planning Commission as follows:

Ms. Mester acknowledged this year was the most challenging one to undertake to develop the CIP. There were significant changes undertaken jointly with the staff and with the City Manager's concurrence. The commissioners were provided with a copy of the CIP notebook along with the CIP presentation, City Council's adopted vision, a cheat sheet which shows what projects are debt or grant funded, a copy of the full Council-School Board-Planning Commission budget calendar, and a copy of Chapter 6 budgets from the City Code as relates to the capital budget, which speaks to the alternate schedule before the commission as an option.

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



Ms. Mester explained the CIP format and the binder notebook the commissioners had received and how it was organized. She also explained all the differences in this binder CIP than from the previous year's formatting.

The schedule was tonight, January 19th, presentation of the CIP and first public hearing, going over the financial overview and projects. February 1st is a Planning Commission worksession where they'll go through the targeted projects on an exemption basis. There will not be three worksessions where they go in detail department by department. February 16th will be the Planning Commission's second public hearing and then adoption of recommendations to forward to the City Manager for his proposed budget on March 8th.

Ms. Mester presented an overview of the CIP and she highlighted the big numbers that were in the CIP which were recommended. The prior funded column was added this year to show what resources had been had and what is proposed for FY11 and the 5 year projection.

There was a school information technology proposed. It's in the CIP but it is not recommended and commissioners will be able to see what was submitted and the full next.

For public safety, just under 500,000 for FY 11. Public facilities, only 100,000. Environment, daylighting, stormwater, just under a million; and transportation, just over 500,000. In the FY11 CIP, there is only \$1.6 million worth of projects. The full 5 years totals up to just under 48 million which is the result of under public facilities there will be almost 45 million which is the debt funded public facilities for school, library, City Hall and public safety.

On utilities, for water and sewer there is approximately 5 million in the FY11 CIP, a total of 36 million over the 5 year period. These are totally funded from the water-sewer funds and are not dependent on the general fund fund balance.

Looking at how the projects are proposed to be funded, there are some things funded by grants, debt financed, only if there's a grant or some other revenue offset, and then pay-as-you-go, which is the locally funded tax funded programs. In FY11 there is only \$318,000 proposed to be funded by local tax funding out of the undesignated fund balance. That is clearly as a result of the economic downturn and the court ruling on the water litigation and the loss of \$2.2 million transfer.

Over the 5 year period, this is a \$57 million CIP, once again mostly debt funded through facilities and there is a total of \$500,000 pay-as-you-go local funding in the CIP. In essence, no tax dollars in the CIP.

The accounting regulation change was left in as the presentation from last year. It was implemented last year but it is required this year. This is the accounting regulations where equipment and must be changed, things that aren't facility and ground infrastructure. There is a column that says CIP or COP for capital operating; under the City Charter and City Code the CIP is a purview of the Planning Commission but for long term planning a consolidated document still works best for staff and management. So the commissioners have an integrated plan in front of them.

Council's vision shows the nine desired future states where the City should be in 2025. As per the Charter and Code the CIP should be developed in compliance and consistent with Council vision, the Comprehensive Plan, and the amended

MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010



transportation component of the Comp Plan.

The financial challenges provided the formulation of the CIP. Even with the financial challenges, long range planning is critically important for the City and its infrastructure needs. The document serves as a strong documentation of the needs, many of which cannot be funded.

Declining revenue and fund balance definitely impacted the CIP and required severe prioritization and elimination which was not done until 3 o'clock yesterday. Ms. Mester noted she had to redo everything.

Numerous projects are not recommended in the CIP. With all the bad news presented and what is not in the CIP, there are some positive things. For example, the grants the City has, approximately ten million dollars, local money to match those grants existed prior to the FY11 CIP. Those are the ones talked about in the joint session that were retained but did not eliminate approximately 770,000, so they didn't lose almost 8 million dollars of grant money. This will allow work on storm water and transportation and those grants are easily a 5 year work plan in terms of staff resources. They are very thin and lean on implementing those projects with the grant. As before they're looking for any line of service reduction which may reduce staffing resources because of budget cuts.

To tie it into the fund balance and how it impacts the CIP, in November the City Manager put forth a plan to reduce \$5.6 million out of the current fiscal year which had the concurrence of City Council. Those revenue projections were reevaluated for the mid year financial report which is before Council and the School Board as they speak. That, including the water litigation court ruling which will be under appeal but they won't know that for a full year, so they're budgeting it as if they lost the 2.2 because the court ruling precludes them from transferring that funding as it stands right now. They're looking at almost a ten million dollar budget deficit this year. It went from 5.6 to 10 million dollars. That is clearly from the 2.2 from the water litigation but also not having photo red up and also revenues going down, including the State.

Under tab one were the full memos that went to Council this evening for the mid year financial report as well as the memo on water litigation impact. The same deficit will carry into FY10 because they'll not be able to transfer that 2.2 million. They're looking at doing immediate cuts this year because of the loss of the 2.2 million transfer. That will put them in a position to carry over into FY11.

With no action taken to change revenues or reduce expenditures, that would bring the undesignated fund balance revenue ratio to 3.2. As they'll recall from last year regarding the policies, the minimum threshold is 8 percent. If there is no change in the tax rate, the fund balance revenue goes to 3.2. If the tax rate goes to a 25 cent increase, it is 8.57 and brings the City back to policy compliance. This is why there are no projects in the CIP that are locally funded. They have to get to the 8 percent threshold minimum, and that would take a 25 cent tax increase to do that. The 12 percent of revenues is the threshold per policy that local tax funding above 12 percent can go to CIP.

Even at the 25 percent, they will still have a negative \$2.2 million.

With regard to debt to revenue reserve fund policies, Ms. Mester showed a synopsis of the policies which were provided and these were the ones readopted by Council. Annual debt service, the key one is "shall not exceed 12 percent of the City's

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



expenditures." That is a "shall." That is challenging in any time with the ability to do debt capacity but it gets worse when you realize they're reducing expenditures because of the revenue shortfall. So the revenue is going down and that is what the 12 percent is tied against. So that also reduces the debt capacity.

Ms. Mester showed a chart which translated the policy. The top line was the 12 percent they can't exceed and the other line was what the current debt was. The drop down shown was because of an uneven amortization schedule for Mary Ellen Henderson, which goes back up, a little over 11 percent is what is proposed in the CIP for debt-funded projects.

For the reserve revenue, as mentioned, the floor is basically 8 percent. The goal is to have 12 percent fund balance. Anything over 12 percent by policy can be used for locally funded CIP projects. If you go below 8 percent, you're required to bring it back to compliance within two years and within an additional 3 years from that point or a total of 5 years the City must by policy be back to 12. So the CIP presented tonight will actually bring the City back to 8 percent in FY11 which is very important because she didn't see FY12 getting better in terms of economic stability and will bring the City back to 12 percent by FY14 in year 4.

Some of the parameters which drove the CIP because of the financial challenges was the goal to get back to 12 percent. The CIP was built from a zero base. Basically they started from scratch.

Only critical health and safety or grant match funded projects are recommended for adoption in the CIP. The priority is to recharge the fund balance. All of the non-recommended projects are presented so the commissioners could see them.

One of the other key parameters is there is no facility debt service in FY11. So all the facility projects were pushed out at least one year. The debt service always picks up the year after they issue debt.

Additionally all of the \$4.2 million holds plus the net proceeds from 215 South Lee, a little over \$4.6 million, were eliminated. Everything that was on hold in November with the hopes they could be revisited, cannot be revisited. They're eliminated in the proposed CIP before the commissioner tonight which was the only way to get back to policy.

It is recommended that the open space debt funded money of \$1.1 million be held until February or March so they see how the revenues in the proposed City Manager's budget comes out. There was a little under million dollars retained for the grant money mentioned and the facility money for general government and schools.

Two other key things Ms. Mester wished to highlight for the Planning Commission was this assumes a 25 percent tax increase in order to bring this into policy.

Chair Lawrence asked about 215 South Lee.

Ms. Mester related that money goes back to fund balance as general fund, as did all the other projects put on hold.

All the projects proposed for hold, that are now proposed to be eliminated, the total hold is \$4.61 million, all of that goes back into fund balance. That plus the 25 percent proposed tax increase and a 2 percent dedicated funding from revenues for CIP brings the City back to policy compliance and still has very

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



little locally funded projects.

The other big revenue piece proposed in this CIP, there is an option under State Code for the City to adopt an ordinance for a commercial tax overlay district for the purposes of transportation only. It cannot supplant existing programs or staff but it can do new staff or expansion of existing capacity. It is only for the commercial area that gets taxed. That excludes multi family rentals, so it's not your residential commercial because multi family rental complexes are assessed as commercial. It would allow them to do a whole lot of pedestrian transit in the main corridors as well as pedestrian walkways, bicycle lanes and things that would feed into metro routes or metro stations and the residential.

There is proposed for FY12 a 6 cent tax increase for the overlay district that generates between 400 and 450,000 dollars because it's only on the more restricted area. It is proposed for FY12 because the City would have to adopt an ordinance and then adopt a tax rate and there needs to be good dialogue with the community and the businesses for that. When this last was raised, which was part of the NVT House Bill 3202, which for the most part was found unconstitutional by the Virginia Supreme Court, this piece survived because the local government who's elected for those who's going to be taxed will be making the tax.

Chair Lawrence inquired if the tax could be used for transportation projects anywhere in the City or only in business districts where the tax is paid.

Ms. Mester responded that it can be anywhere in the City, as long as it increases the capacity or expands the road network or transit network. There will be some limitations and she'll be working with Ms. Cotellessa and Ms. Block Sanford, who's the transportation planner, and the City engineer to fine tune that State Code.

There are things like you can't repair an existing sidewalk or you can't move poles on an existing sidewalk to make it ADA compliant because it's not expanding capacity or expansion, but there are ways to do things in the residential areas because they do feed into the road networks.

George would not be an option because it's not for operating costs but only for capital.

Ms. Hockenberry asked if this was similar to what Fairfax County has put in place. Ms. Mester said yes, Fairfax County and Arlington. State code allows up to 25 cents. What she's seen is either 8 or 10 cents. She started off with a pretty conservative 6 percent. The 6 cents would be below anybody and wouldn't put them at a competitive disadvantage with the neighboring jurisdictions.

Ms. Teates said as a business owner in the City, they already feel like they pay a lot of taxes. If the projects are pretty concrete and they seem valuable to a business owner, she thinks it will be fine but they already feel like they write pretty big checks.

Ms. Mester acknowledged that there will be a lot of discussion around the tax rate because 25 cents for the real estate tax rate is pretty significant. As they're looking as how the assessments are rolling out, they're seeing 18 to 20 percent reduction in the commercial assessed tax base so that will look more like a equalized tax rate. On the residential, they're seeing 0 to 2 or 3 percent down. So they're going to see a significant tax rate increase. It's not anticipated to fund anything in FY11.

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



Ms. Mester pointed out the chart showed the general government fund balance as a percentage of revenues. That is where in FY11 they are at 8.0, they hit the policy limit, and then by FY14 they see 12.9 percent. The debt ratios are shown, and by 2015 they hit 11.7, just under the maximum 12 percent policy limit.

Ms. Mester said the CIP schedule is for Planning Commission adoption on January 16th. City manager presents two weeks later, March 8th, and his proposed budget. The schedule proposes adoption of the CIP concurrent with the operating budget on April 26th. However, the State code does allow for an additional 28 days, which is why the City Code was provided to the commissioners, so that the CIP could be adopted separately from the operating budget but it has to be within 28 days. So there is an alternative on the third page of the schedule where the CIP could be adopted May 24. If Council does not adopt on April 26, Ms. Mester proposed working with Ms. Cotellessa to bring the CIP back to the Planning Commission. Because if they don't adopt it on April 26th, it's because the tax rate, however it's set, high or above the 25 percent proposed in the CIP, would dramatically change the CIP the Commission would have taken action on.

Ms. Mester went through some of the key projects in the CIP, both recommended and not recommended. For schools, there were three projects. The first one is information technology. It is \$165,000 phased over two years to replace computer equipment at the Mary Ellen Henderson career and technical education lab because it's aged out. However there was insufficient funding and it is not recommended.

Public safety, there is a continuation of the radio upgrade that was approved in the CIP last year. That was for the police officers, but what remains undone is to convert the operations crew, both from environmental services that do public works, the urban forestry crew, and the Recs and Park maintenance crew over to digital versus analog radios which will be required by 2012, will be enforced starting in 2013. If the City does not convert in that time frame, they'll very likely lose the FCC frequency license already paid for and because there is a real limit on availability of frequencies, the City will not have a public works channel. That is also not recommended for the CIP.

There continues to be a facility upgrade request from the Falls Church volunteers. That is in FY13, for approximately \$145,000. That is originally targeted for window replacement as talked about in the past but also could serve as a grant match because of a \$525,000 grant in for federal stimulus money to do major renovations to that building because it's not ADA accessible and an air conditioner not working. The ladder truck is proposed but not until FY15 and the pumper truck is not recommended.

Ms. Mester related a process started with Arlington County to look at how the building is managed from a maintenance perspective along with equipment. They have economy of sales and contractors because they're used to maintaining a lot of fire stations versus our only one and Falls Church is looking to see if we can be more cost effective and maybe do lease purchase of vehicles and stop having to do high debt finance purchases and then hopefully sell them. They have a system where they turn them over and receive the proceeds at a nice rate. That discussion will not be completed before the CIP is adopted. Ms. Mester's recommendation is to have the match money in there for the stimulus money if they get it.

On the general government front for facilities, they're still in the process of developing the 20 year master plan. As talked about in the past this is joint with schools. It is an evolution process that keeps get challenged with budget issues but they are moving along. It is not completed yet and what they see before them

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



in terms of facilities looks like what they saw last year.

There is a high need for facility reinvestment for mechanical, HVAC system repairs in this building. The CIP only puts \$50,000 this year for all of the government, general government facility for facilities for all of FY 11. The same will be for schools. The request from the staff was very minimal. They prioritized the bare minimum that they thought they needed to keep the facilities together, and this is City Hall, Community Center, the library, Aurora House, the property yard, and Gage House, at \$100,000 per year. What is in the CIP is only 50,000 for the entire five year period.

City Hall and public safety improvements, Ms. Mester was continuing to work to scale that back and have a much more cost efficient space utilization so the proposal gets down to 12 million for City Hall. Community Center is a long range plan that would fit into the 20 year piece. What is in the CIP is 12 million debt funded.

The Library Board of Trustees did request as last year the \$6.7 million for the library expansion renovation project. It is in the CIP only at 2 million as was seen last year. It is pushed out to FY12 because no facility debt financing was put in FY11.

Chair Lawrence asked if City Hall is having talks with Arlington about the future of the courthouse and turning that over to Arlington.

Ms. Mester said a preliminary conversation had been had. The initial reaction, the cost benefit analysis is not favorable. Arlington would charge for doing that. They don't have space and parking. And the cost of staff, officers and citizens that would then have to go to Arlington, doesn't have a savings on the operating side. Maybe on the facilities side but not on the operating side. Ms. Mester continues to serve on the court security committee and when talking to the judge they have raised that question. Even if they pursued it, it probably would not be in effect in FY11.

Chair Lawrence acknowledged he was on the library board and didn't recall sending a new request this year for the 6.7. They had assumed the 2 million would get pushed out.

Ms. Mester explained the library director forwarded to her what was formally adopted by the Library Board of Trustees. Timing did not allow her to have it before the Commission to readopt at a lower rate. Since she didn't want to override the formal action but clearly they all knew it wouldn't fit and it would be coming before the Planning Commission at 2 million. She wanted to make sure she reflected the formal action of the Library Board of Trustees.

Ms. Mester said schools are still in their long range facility planning doing fine tuning. They're looking at what will be the prioritization and what are some of the options and configurations. They are looking at the elementary as one of the prioritizations because of projections and facility needs. They formally submitted from the School Board a \$50 million request as they did last year and it was reduced to \$30 million, so it's within the debt service policy limits. As the 20 year plans get finalized, it can look different or be better able to prioritize next year.

On the environmental front, there are water and sewer utility improvements. They are itemized and are not funded out of the general fund. The Environmental

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



Services staff put forth a recommendation to improve curb side solid waste collection with new trucks and retrofitted to allow the big carts and increase recycling and trash clean up. That is not recommended in this CIP.

Concurrent with this process they're looking at other methods to save money on the operating side by contracting that out. A lot of contractors come with the larger carts and they wouldn't have to purchase the carts but basically leasing them through the contract. They continue to look at another alternative for that.

Ms. Hockenberry asked if there's been any move to put a dollar amount on solid waste collection so people will know that is something that is included within their taxes.

Ms. Mester said staff just received a consultant's report that puts out cost estimates as to what it is costing currently with alternatives. Privatization might be a cheaper way to go but of course that impacts direct staff currently have doing the trash. That is something being looked at which can be quantified and it hasn't been processed as to whether that would actually be a separate solid waste fee or just be a line item on your bill to see what portion of the tax rate goes towards that.

In the CIP under environment, two more positive things were there is funding available to do some streambank stabilization, to finish the Pearson Branch, and then also that includes acquisition money set aside for co-branch to include that storm water management. Recs and Parks has \$60,000 to go along with the storm water money and Environmental Services. There is funding available from an additional grant from the Feds to work on storm water.

There are two federal grants from federal year '09 and '10 in the amount of \$485,000 each for which there is a 45 percent match. So the CIP under environment, there are green areas and white. The white in the chart, on 3.1, shows the local match. These are STAG, State Tribal Assistant Grants. They were successful getting in the two federal budgets thanks to Congressman Moran's advocacy. It is clearly not as significant as the City needs. As in last year, staff proposed \$775,000 to do 1000 linear feet of storm water improvement. None of that is recommended in the CIP beyond what they can do with the two federal grants.

The Power Point included the slide information in terms of the 28 miles of pipe and the efforts they've been doing for studying, modeling, and prioritizing the storm water. There is a watershed management plan in process, the community task force and they hope by summer to have that plan which will prioritize projects and also recommend alternative funding sources which could be similar to the question Ms. Hockenberry raised on solid waste, a storm water utility fee.

As it relates to the water and utility projects, there continues to be a lot to improve the treatment plans for water and sewer. They're all in partnership with Fairfax, Arlington, and Alexandria. Those projects are debt funded to pay the City's share of the loan and the rehab. There are two projects to do water line repair and sewer line rehab which targets linear feet each year to keep working on and improving infrastructure for the long term.

Transportation has the most significant change in the CIP in terms of program delivery and also the most significant amount of money due to grants. They have taken what was formally the VDOT six years improvement money of 4.125 million and the safety lieu Section 5309 intermodal center money and are proposing to reprogram

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



that.

In the transportation section there is a full write up of those programs and the time lines for where the money drops off. It was touched on during the joint worksession at the end of October, November when talking about the budgets and the need to use or loose.

The VDOT six year money doesn't have a specific date that it cuts off on but as they all know the State is looking to do budget reductions. If money sits in the account, they're starting to pull back. Last year they actually pulled back any monies for FY10 and 11 and had to change those projects.

There is no new money on the horizon. Staff does not want to be in a position giving back grant money. The six year money is labeled VDOT SYIP 6 year improvement money, transportation improvements umbrella, and they cross-referenced it so it's formerly City Center Transportation Improvements. For \$4 million, the City only have to put in \$82 million of local match money to it. They're proposing that they look at that umbrella money and look to implement the plans that have been adopted and look at economic development and use this money instead of losing it. That will be looking at the North Washington and South Washington Street Implementation. They have sidewalk construction, pedestrian improvements, traffic calming, many things that they have plans for. Targets and no money. They recommend using this. Much of it would be in the City Center area but broader because it will be going down Washington Street.

In addition, within that six year VDOT money, there are two grants that are federal stimulus money and they're tied into here because of the same projects, \$250,000 which was just before the Planning Commission, the sidewalk money, and there is a pending grant with the State for \$115,000 to finish out the traffic signals so they're all LEDs.

The same model was used for the intermodal money. It is proposed to take that money to be just bus and bus facilities. That is the eligible use. That can be equipment, bus turnover, bus shelters. They're proposing it get reprogrammed. One of the alternatives which is dependent on the George Task Force due to come back February 1st for a worksession, is could they use that in partnership with Arlington. It has to be used for capital. What is before them is a recommendation for it to be capital because it's the current allowable use, depending on the outcome of the task force and the recommendation to keep George or not to keep George. Hopefully there will be an update before the Planning Commission adopts on February 16th.

Two other new grants in the CIP for transportation which were not previously in the CIP: First one is under the transportation header, also called bus and bus facilities, formerly West Falls Church Shuttle. In 2001 there was a federal grant safety lieu money, same source as the intermodal, awarded to the City to provide a shuttle to West Falls Church from a parking lot in the City on Broad Street while the parking garage was under development at West Falls Church.

Shuttles were never bought. In 2004 it was reprogrammed to buy buses and transferred to WMATA. Sitting at WMATA is \$728,000. As the George work was started, Ms. Mester submitted a grant request to Congressman Moran for safety lieu, it was learned the City has \$728,000 sitting at WMATA. They proposed putting it in the CIP for programming for bus and bus facilities. Depending on how the intermodal money goes, they could have this money to complement some of the Broad Street and Washington Street plans for enhancing transit, bus shelters, turn lanes,

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION**

**APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



equipment, and buses. It does require a match as does the intermodal money but they're fortunate that the Northern Virginia Transportation Commission has already gotten state money from the Department of Rail and Public Transportation to match the intermodal money and will apply and is probably 99 percent sure to get it to match the \$728,000. On February 1st they intend to talk through the details of the plan.

Ms. Mester said if Planning Commission and City Council approves it, they need to go back to the state to reprogram the State six year money and to go back to the feds to reprogram the intermodal money. They're already started the process of reprogramming the 728 because no matter what, they knew they weren't going to buy three large buses.

The City also did get a Route 7 Enhanced Transit Service grant through Congressman Moran's office in the FY10 budget. That is a new grant in this budget as well. It's \$350,000 to do a study of Route 7. It's a regional effort. Ms. Mester had originally proposed 100,000 to do Route 7 to see how to enhance transit, whether that's light rail, trolley, rapid bus, and it was increased it so it's a regional partnership with Arlington, Alexandria, and Fairfax. The project in the budget will be administered by Northern Virginia Transportation Commission on their behalf as the NPO. They'll do grant management and do the implementation coordination and also are going to apply for the State match so the City does not have to match the federal money.

That rework of the grant match allowed Miss Mester to free up the \$417,000 already in the CIP for the intermodal match to apply towards the revenue sharing grant in the amount of \$654,399. It turned out this grant award had never been in the CIP because it didn't have a match. She's proposing it to be in the CIP now. It's a one for one dollar match. Currently it only has 417,000 matching to it so they'll only be able to use up to 417,000. If they don't start using it, they'll lose it. If they start using it, hopefully as the economy recovers they'll get the rest of the match.

Utility relocation and undergrounding which is needed is not recommended for approval due to no money and would not be eligible for the commercial tax overlay because it's not increasing capacity or expanding road network.

The next project, pedestrian, bicycle, and traffic calming improvements is the tax overlay in gold to implement the pedestrian and traffic calming study that the consultant is close to being hired for.

As to Recreation and Parks, the open space, 1.1 debt funded money, is still available. It is recommended to be on hold. She didn't know of any projects currently but no proactive outreach to acquire until they see how the budget situation stabilizes.

Big Chimneys-Triangle Park money is still showing in the CIP because it is a legal agreement for that proffer. There is no activity on that redevelopment and there is no local funding to go any further than that proffer.

Ms. Mester also failed to mention \$6 million in transportation for the City Center Municipal Parking Garage. It is still in the CIP because it is still tied to a legal agreement with Atlantic Reality for the SE approved for City Center South. Legally they must still have that CIP project. The debt service is not in the 5 year projections until FY12. When the project is at its three year limit, the CIP will have to be readopted and that will only happen pending what is happening with

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



the project. It does take up \$6 million of the debt service capacity but the City is under a legal agreement currently.

Chair Lawrence asked when that legal agreement expired. Ms. Mester said the legal agreement is under review by the City Attorney because it does have a different time line configuration than an SE. She didn't have a specific answer because Mr. Foster was reviewing that, as they continue to work with Atlantic Realty for what they're going to do with their development.

Ms. Mester noted there is only \$100,000 to handle any critical facility crisis that can happen on any of the four schools or five general government facilities. The last page showed priority projects that weren't recommended but if there was a change in the fund balance, the tax rate, or a reconfiguration of the projects as presented, those would be the top ones she would ask the Planning Commission to consider. The first two were clearly for facility reinvestment, maintenance, and repair, as it's extremely risky to only have \$100,000 in the CIP for such needs.

In working with Mr. Herman, he requests West End Park development be considered for his \$300,000 request because the site plan was just approved and the project was here to go.

The solid waste curb side collection would be the four one, which would be somewhat dependent on during the operating budget process decide there is an alternative way to contract or manage that.

Given the economic climate and the numbers given, she didn't believe they would get to the fourth priority project for funding.

Ms. Rodgers asked if the Route 7 was a match. Ms. Mester said that was new in the FY10 budget and the State would provide the match money.

Mr. Wodiska inquired about the general fund funding sources summary. He couldn't tie the numbers back to Tab 3.1, fiscal year 2012 looked like \$2.9 million but was listing 16.2 million; and then fiscal year 2013, it's got 12,500,000 and showing 3.8 at the bottom. Ms. Mester admitted she reversed the columns and would correct that. The number should really say 47 million as opposed to 57 million.

Mr. Wodiska asked if all of the projects in the CIP were predicated on the 25 cents increase, which Ms. Mester acknowledged was correct.

Mr. Wodiska further noted the library expansion piece in this packet was listed as a Priority 2 item and how do Priority 2 items get onto the CIP as opposed to only Priority 1 items.

Ms. Mester explained the priority items that weren't 1 but were debt funded are in the CIP. For FY10, anything that was eliminated was based on Priority 1, 2, and 3. 1, being grant funded or health and safety; debt funded projects that were Priority 2 were recommended to the CIP, because they didn't impact the pay-as-you-go 8 percent.

Chair Lawrence said it was a lot to absorb and anticipated a lot of questions at the next worksession.

Ms. Mester said she would appreciate if anybody had any questions to send them ahead of time to Ms. Cotellessa.

**MINUTES OF THE 19 JANUARY 2010 MEETING OF THE PLANNING COMMISSION  
APPROVED FEBRUARY 1, 2010**



Chair Lawrence asked if the March 18th was another meeting date. It says follow-up with School Board and Planning Commission.

Ms. Mester said it is a follow-up on the property discussion had before. The intent is for this to be joint with Council, School Board and Planning Commission to discuss that report as a follow-up. The Planning Commission would be asked to join City Council that night. Locations were not listed because it depends on size and space demands.

**10. OTHER BUSINESS:** None.

**11. MINUTES FOR APPROVAL:** December 7, 2009

**MOTION:** Ms. Teates moved, and Ms. Hockenberry seconded, to approved the minutes as amended.

Upon roll call vote, the motion passed unanimously.

**12. ADJOURNMENT:** Ms. Teates made a motion, which Mr. Meeks seconded, to adjourn at 9:28 p.m. Immediately following the meeting the Planning Commission met in a worksession regarding two zoning text amendments and the introduction of the Wilden Project, formally referred by City Council.

Respectfully Submitted,



Ann Hieber  
Recording Secretary

Noted and Approved:



Suzanne Cotellessa, AICP  
Planning Director

The City of Falls Church is committed to the letter and spirit of the Americans with Disabilities Act. This document will be made available in an alternate format upon request. Call 703.248.5040, TTY711.